

Apocrypha

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Basic Definition and History

- Definition: Writings that are included in the Catholic and Orthodox Old Testaments being excluded from the Protestant Old Testament or Jewish texts written after the Tanakh
- Apocryphal texts had validity debated from antiquity
- Protestants had varying views on the Apocrypha but didn't see it as canonical
- In response, the Catholics declared the Apocrypha canonical
- Orthodox Churches consider Apocrypha and sometimes more canonical

Other Definitions and Characteristics

- Sometimes defined as texts in Septuagint and not Masoretic text
 - Not universal
- Another understanding is that texts were meant to be hidden
 - Only applies to very few of them
- Very diverse in genre, language, and date of origin

Why do we Care?

- Written during Second Temple Judaism
 - can give us an idea of popular Second Temple ideas
- Valued by Ancient Jews
 - Used by Josephus
 - Circulated far in Second Temple world
- Ideas of some Apocrypha reflected by Jesus
 - Useful to know Jesus' ideas when studying Gospels

Works Cited

- Desilva, David A. "Apocrypha, 'Old Testament.'" In *The Encyclopedia of Second Temple Judaism*, edited by Daniel M. Gurtner and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, 43-45. United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.
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